

**Statement of Chairman Mike Rogers (R-AL)**  
**Subcommittee on Transportation Security**  
**Committee on Homeland Security**  
**Hearing on “Terrorism and Transportation Security”**  
**With TSA Administrator John Pistole**  
**February 10, 2011**

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On behalf of our full committee Chairman Peter King, I would like to welcome everyone to the first hearing of the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress for the Subcommittee on Transportation Security.

I am pleased to be joined by our Subcommittee Ranking Member, Ms. Shelia Jackson-Lee of Texas. The Ranking Member and I already have a strong working relationship and I look forward to continuing it this Congress to make TSA a more effective agency.

The topic of this hearing is Terrorism and Transportation Security. I would like to welcome our witness, TSA Administrator John Pistole and thank him for being here today. We look forward to your testimony and greatly appreciate your time.

Let me state first and foremost that TSA is a counter-terrorism agency and it must maintain that mission as its primary focus. If there are programs or offices within TSA that do not directly support that primary mission or could operate more efficiently, this subcommittee will look closely to see where taxpayer dollars could be better spent at TSA to achieve a greater level of security.

It is also important to state at the outset that regardless of what other committees in the House might want you to believe, this subcommittee is the subcommittee with primary jurisdiction over all of TSA. In this role we plan to exercise vigorous oversight of the agency and the security of all transportation modes including aviation, cargo, rail, mass transit, trucking, and pipelines.

Where TSA is succeeding, we should applaud them. Where they are struggling to address vulnerabilities or to work with stakeholders, we should help them find new solutions. We can all agree that the safe and secure flow of passengers and commerce through all modes of transportation is critical to our nation’s economy.

TSA is obviously a vital element to ensure this happens within a framework that includes many stakeholders. In many ways, post-9/11 security has been a series of reactive tactics and strategies by TSA. Existing practices would benefit from proactive, intelligence-based decisions.

Mr. Pistole, we have discussed your interest in this area and I look forward to strengthening these types of programs in TSA. Also at times, TSA’s efforts are seen to be counterproductive to

industry or lack coordination with industry. I look forward to examining ways to bring the best practices of industry and TSA together for better security and safer transit. I want to emphasize that this subcommittee will examine how TSA spends the taxpayer dollars. Suffice it to say as with any large government agency, there is waste at TSA. Over the last few months, there have been several high profile media stories on this issue.

I have met with GAO and DHS IG to discuss TSA's acquisitions and spending practices and I plan to hold hearings on this issue in the near future. I believe we should not automatically separate national security from fiscal security. I believe TSA and the taxpayer could benefit from procurement and acquisition reforms and I plan to pursue them.

Finally, it seems there is not a day that goes by that TSA isn't in the news making headlines. Believe me, in the business we are in, that can be both a good thing and a bad thing. Just last Friday it was announced that TSA would allow its employees to vote on a collective bargaining framework that could lead to the unionization of TSA employees. You and I spoke by phone Friday morning before the decision was made public.

I continue to appreciate your willingness to keep us informed before we read these types of major announcements in the papers. With regard to collective bargaining rights for TSA employees, I expressed my concern about it to you before and will do so again today. Because of the potential impact of this decision, I am going to allow extra time for you to fully explain your decision making on the collective bargaining framework and for members to ask questions about it.

In sum, we must remain vigilant against the terrorists focused on attacking us, and specifically on attacks aimed at our transportation systems. I have met with Administrator Pistole on multiple occasions since becoming Chair.

I am very pleased with the fact that he has significant law enforcement and counter-terrorism experience. I believe he is the right person for this difficult job and look forward to working with him on transportation security.

Mr. Pistole, thank you for your service to our nation throughout your career and thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to meet with us. I look forward to your testimony. With that I now recognize the Ranking Member of the subcommittee, the gentle lady from Texas, Ms. Jackson-Lee for five minutes for her opening statement.

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